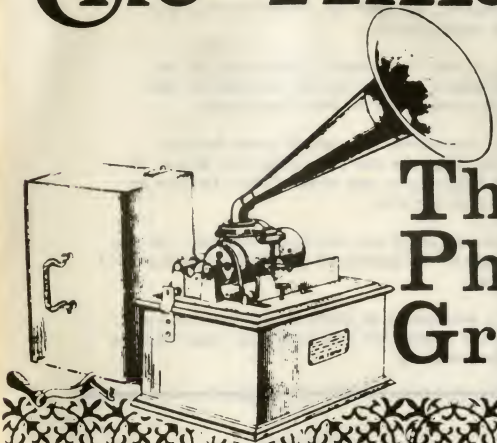


The Hillandale News



The official journal of the
**The City of London
Phonograph and
Gramophone Society**

inaugurated 1919

No. 82

FEBRUARY 1975



Collection of Fibre Needles and Fibre Needle Cutters of Toru Funahashi, Osaka

SOCIETY RULES

1. That the Society shall be called THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH and that its objects shall be the social intercourse of its members, as well as the musical study of sound reproducing apparatus, as well as its application.
2. That the Officers of the Society shall consist of a President, Vice President, Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Financial Treasurer and Meeting Secretary, who shall be elected at each Annual General Meeting in October, and who shall be ex-officio members of the Committee.
3. That the management of the Society be vested in a Committee, similarly elected at each Annual General Meeting, and with power to co-opt, and that its duties shall be the carrying into effect of these rules and objects. Written notice must be given to the Secretary one clear month before an Annual General Meeting of any resolution proposing to amend these rules.
4. New members (ladies or gentlemen) may be elected on the nomination of any existing member, at any meeting of the Society on the payment of an annual subscription to be approved at the Annual General Meeting, which is renewable twelve calendar months thereafter.
5. The Financial Treasurer shall, once in every year, submit a statement of Accounts of the Society to an Auditor elected by the Society and shall furnish a Balance Sheet for the financial year ending October for the inspection of members at each Annual General Meeting.

President: Major H.H. Annand, [REDACTED], Hillingdon, Middlesex.
 Vice-President: Mr. G. Frow, [REDACTED], Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 3SH.
 Chairman: Mr. L.L. Watts, [REDACTED], Twickenham, Middlesex, TW2 5LJ.
 Vice-Chairman & Membership Sec.: Mr. C. Proudfoot, [REDACTED], Meopham, Gravesend, Kent.
 Hon. Secretary: Mr. W. Brott, [REDACTED], West Finchley, London, N3 1PG.
 Committee: Messrs. B. Raynaud, F. Andrews, R. Armstrong.

TREASURER'S NOTES

In future, would members please send all monies in Sterling (cheques, P. Orders, etc.) direct to the Treasurer, together with all orders for goods, as this will simplify our accounting system, and avoid double handling.

MEMBERSHIP RATES

U.K. and Europe	£1. 50 per year
New Zealand Airmail	£2. 75 per year
Australia, Japan, etc. (now payable directly to the Treasurer, as bulk subscription has ceased).	£2. 75 per year
U.S.A. and Canada	\$5. 50 Surface Mail
	\$7. 00 Airmail

Overseas members are requested to send STERLING DRAFTS or banknotes, as check clearances here carry a high commission rate. The Society no longer operates within the Post Office Giro system. New Zealand and Australian Postal Orders are acceptable in the U.K.

To save postage in mailing receipts, these are sent out with the goods or next magazine to members.

PLEASE MAKE OUT ALL CHECKS AND DRAFTS PAYABLE TO "THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH AND GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY".

Treasurer's Address: Mr. B.A. Williamson, [REDACTED], Liverpool, L16 1LA.

MEETINGS are held at the "John Snow" public house, Broadwick Street, Soho, London, W.1. During the Winter months (September to March) on the second Saturday of each month, commencing at 6.30 p.m., and in the remaining months of the year, on the second Tuesday of the month, commencing at 7 p.m.

In addition, regular meetings are held at the following centres:

HEREFORD Details from the Secretary, Mr. D.G. Watson, [REDACTED], Tupsley, Hereford.

MIDLANDS Details from the Secretary, Mr. P. Bennett, [REDACTED], Goldthorn Park, Wolverhampton, Staffs, WV4 5DE. Phone: [REDACTED].

MANCHESTER Details from the Secretary, Mr. A.E. Hock, [REDACTED], Croston, Lancs.

VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA Details from Mr. C. Gracie, [REDACTED], Cavendish, Victoria 3408, Australia.

ZURICH, SWITZERLAND Details from the Secretary, Herr W. Schenker, [REDACTED], Zurich, Switzerland.

MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE that all money should now be sent to our NEW TREASURER (address overleaf).

THE HILLDALE NEWS is published on behalf of the CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH & GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY by Bill Brott, to whom all articles should be sent, and P.H. Curry, "Brockhurst", The Grange, St. Peter Port, Guernsey, Channel Islands, to whom all advertisements should be sent.

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The Official Journal of
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(Inaugurated 1919)

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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Perhaps my other self, as membership secretary, may be allowed to usurp part of this column to enlarge on the new subscription system outlined in the AGM report in the December Hillandale News. In fact, we have now decided to adopt March 1st as the renewal date rather than October, and the aim is to bring this into operation by March 1st 1976. All members will thereafter receive reminders with the December issue of the magazine, and Final Reminders with the February issue. No further reminders will be sent out, and April magazines will only be sent to members when their subscription has been renewed.

There will, of course, be some complication during the changeover period; the plan is to ask for pro rata subscriptions during 1975, calculated to expire on March 1st 1976 in the case of April-July '75 renewals and on March 1st 1977 in the case of August-January ones. Once the new scheme is properly established, it will save us a great deal of time keeping track of subscriptions due every month of the year.

I have been trying to create more display space for my gramophones, but after many hours work putting up shelves both wide enough and rigid enough, I still seem to be snowed under with the things: it is astonishing how quickly a collection expands in bulk without your really realising it. Has anyone else got any ideas on how to display the maximum number of machines in the minimum of space?

OBITUARY

It is with very deep regret, I have to announce the death of our President Jerry Annand, who died on the 15th December 1974. He joined the Society in 1947 and was one of the leading stalwarts who kept the Society alive with his enthusiasm, particularly in the cylinder collecting field, and whose knowledge regarding the recording artists was unsurpassed. His constant campaign for playing acoustic cylinders on an acoustic machine (and I for one was with him all the way) started many heated discussions amongst the younger and newer members who accepted an electrified reproducer through an amplifier as normal.

His presence at our meetings always added an air of authority - he will be sadly missed.

Bill Brott

by GEORGE FROW

In the October issue of HILLANDALE NEWS, I attempted to give a fair comment on and a precis of some issues of THE STYLUS, a privately issued magazine of 1922, and I appealed to any other members who had come across any similar phonograph or gramophone magazines.

I had hopes of publishing any results in the December issue, but that went in for printing before there was time to collect thoughts or any contributions to an article. However Roy Arnold wrote to tell me of RECORDS, with which was incorporated BRITISH INVENTIONS, of 1900, and according to Frank Andrews there were but three of these published, in September, October and November of that year, price one penny each. To suggestions that it was a house magazine of J. E. Hough (Edisonia Ltd.), Roy Arnold points out that it carried an advert by Nicole Freres, but another advertiser, the reciter William Lynd was making records for J. E. Hough at that time and it may well have been intended to be that.

THE ROTADISC NEWS (Regd.) of 1955 was the quarterly official periodical of The London Gramophone Circle; in spite of my October plea for further illumination of the Circle and its voice, nobody has written to tell me more about it, and one can only inadequately analyse the Circle through Vol. 1., No. 2. It was edited by George H. Girt and published by H. P. Tramp, two gentlemen I have never encountered and who may well still be around in gramophone circles, but from the magazine's contents one is led to conclude that The London Gramophone Circle had Girt and Tramp as its nucleus, and that a small number of Pen Pals used the magazine to keep in touch through limited advertising. There is no mention of meetings, but there is an Editorial, one technical article ("How Hi is your Hi-fi?" by Spark Gap), and the rest of its sixteen pages are given over to small adverts, competitions, kiddie page ("Build a flying model butterfly" and "Magical chemical beans that grow"), even a competition to find deliberate spelling mistakes in the issue! Editor Girt was no fool, and he charged a shilling for three goes; there was plenty of scope.

He was, (and perhaps still is, though his phone number is no longer listed), a manufacturer's agent, a representative to a number of (usually) small firms, working on commission only, and it is more than likely some of their products which are featured among the gramophone adverts. To list all would be tedious for the reader, but this is the sort of stuff Girt could offer his subscribers; would that our Editor could improve our lives with similar offers! Tuition for sketching at Broadstairs at weekends - craftworkers needed to assemble soft toys at home - send a shilling to stop nail-biting, etc. - hair curling solutions, curls while you sleep - smoking habit cured, simple, rapid, certain - your dreams translated - cracker making tools and kits - anti-steam and frost solutions - insect bite solution - sun burn and sun tan solution; even Girt advertised himself as "Editor of this magazine, married, aged 53, interests: gramophone record collector, possesses some very rare records, also Edison Bell Gem cylinder gramophone (sic), invites others interested". There were 'lonely hearts' too, one Belfast gentleman described himself as "single, age 30 to 50, interests etc..." A leprechaun indeed!

Among these cheap-jack lines some London Gramophone Circle member was prepared to give £2 each for cylinder records, and was offering others for sale as 'Souvinirs' (sic) for the same amount; this was a lot of money for 2-minute cylinders in 1955, when there was very little interest in them. Again prices are high in a Girt advert offering Ballroom Dance Band records at half-a-crown apiece (12½p.).

Among records wanted were fairground and barrel organs, bird and mouth-organ band records, tattoos, and quite unusually, some Chappell records in the 'C' series. Wanted too were discs by Albani, Santley, Bellingham, Battistini, and unwanted copies of THE GRAMOPHONE were welcomed to send to R.A.F. and Army boys abroad.

In spite of what has been inferred, this would seem to have been a sincere attempt to launch a gramophone society journal, and whatever became of it no effort was spared to try and make it attractive to as wide a readership as possible, but there was insufficient substance and too much baking powder and cook was always around. By 1955 L.P. was firmly on the more expensive turntables, but Girt was catering for a 78-inclined Gramophone Circle, and if we are to judge it from his invitations to members to write about the historical side of the interest, THE ROTADISC NEWS was in its odd way a forerunner of this magazine.

DIGS & SCUFFS

by 'UBIQUE'

Headlines in my local CHRONICLE & COURIER caught my eye the other week. They read "Packaged Music - with the aid of a Rubber Band - Tired of your Transistor? Try a Wax Cylinder". It went on to relate in typical journalistic how a local elderly man is the owner of a phonograph, and (true to form) "... it is a 'Berliner' type made by Edison, and still has the original spring and needle". There is a picture of the owner, Nipper-like with one ear cocked, listening to his favourite cylinder on an Edison GEM with straight panelled horn. It looks well cared for, and posed in the photograph are Edison, Columbia and Sterling boxes. The article continues with inaccuracies and nonsenses, but who has read a news report or feature that is absolutely correct? Names, ages, addresses, facts, seem to go overboard in reporting, and trendy articles on hobbies and interests make the enthusiast bristle. The car owner, whose veteran is his constant chore and the pride of his life hears it continually referred to as his "old crock", while those who favour early long-case clocks hear their friends refer to them constantly as "grandfathers and grandmothers". This is a hazard of collecting, but the risk could be reduced if we demanded to see a copy before it went into print. After that there's only the peril of the editor, who will excise the odd sentence and make nonsense of the whole exercise.

A member was showing me some phonograph and gramophone birthday cards the other day; there were four or five variations, each having a different machine on the front. Included were a HOME, a STANARD, and several Continental gramophones, and I rather suspect these came out of a Spanish collection, few if any of the horns being related to the machines and the dating being wildly awful. The Edisons were marked "Phonograph 1880", an obviously Edwardian gramophone "Phonograph 1920", suggesting a 'think of a number' game. There are lots of striking machines in the collections of members which could be aesthetically employed and correctly dated on the covers of greetings cards and surely, if the continent of Europe can offer them, this Society might well undertake a series in co-operation with a graphic artist and a card publisher, and there must be one or two with connections among the membership. This is a request I have made before with Christmas cards in mind; the Society is the body to instigate something along these lines. Has anyone got any ideas? The only snag is that it's becoming too expensive to post them.

Yorkshire Ridings Magazine

A monthly feature about 'people who collect things'

"LIFE'S a funny proposition after all", sang George M. Cohan the American song writer and entertainer in 1904. The Victor Talking Machine Co. made a one-sided brittle '78' record of his philosophy: Half a century later Mr. Maurice Robson of Halifax, Yorkshire, had now set himself the task of trying to find a copy of the record but it was ten years before his quest ended.

"It was a very rare find", said Mr. Robson. "In fact it's difficult to say how rare an old record is until you try to get one". Cohan's most famous record was 'Yankee Doodle Dandy'.

For sixteen years Mr. Robson has been collecting records such as these, thousands of them, and he is reputed to have the finest collection in Yorkshire.

"Not all of them are so difficult to trace", he said, "but searches on market stalls, junk shops and jumble sales sometimes prove rewarding.

Selecting and discarding has reached a fine perfection in Mr. Robson's collection and he is left with a treasure house of voices from the past. The thrilling sound of Enrico Caruso issues from over 100 records, and he has a hundred of Dame Clara Butt, Bejamins Gigli or Tommy Handley, Kathleen Ferrier or Gracie Fields, name it — he has it.

ONE RECORD fills him with pride. But for him it would never have existed: it is the H.M.V. L.P. of the tenor, Walter Widdop singing a selection from his wide repertoire of Oratorios and Opera. Walter was born in 1893 in the moorland village of Norland, not far from Halifax. He worked as a dyer's



Mr. Robson with a miniature record of Reginald Dixon.

labourer and at 21 could not read music but his fine tenor voice was already attracting attention. Under expert tuition he leaped to fame.

It is sad that with his wide repertoire (he was known as one of England's rarest Wagnerian Helden-tenors) he made only 32 records: even these were dropping into oblivion until Mr. Robson suggested to an H.M.V. representative, "Why not a Widdop record?" He supplied biographical data and now a new generation can enjoy this Golden Voice from the past.

Mr. Robson's greatest enjoyment is to play his records for other people to hear. Numerous organisations have listened to his programmes which include not only the records but accounts of the lives of the artists, research into their background being part of his hobby.

It was at Oaklands Old People's Home at Kirkburton, near Hudders-

field, that he put the clock back half a century for one of the residents, Mr. Herbert Teal, who was celebrating his 85th birthday.

Like Walter Widdop, Teal was a tenor, but it was competition work which set his foot on the ladder to fame. Starting in 1910 when he won the solo tenor class at the Blackpool Festival and later appeared with Sir Henry Wood at the Queen's Hall Proms and with great conductors and orchestras such as Landon Ronald and The Hallé. His first recordings in 1912 were made for Beka, a small German company, and later he had a five year contract with H.M.V. Most of his recordings, however, were the popular ballads of his youth such as 'Maire my Girl' (1917) and 'An Eriskay Love Lilt' made for Parlophone, songs which bring a breath of nostalgia to older listeners.

Mr. Robson spends considerable time compiling programmes from his huge library of records. He admits that he could be out every night giving talks and concerts. A few years ago he put on an Old Time Variety programme over the Huddersfield Hospitals Broadcast system and at Christmas time he has given potted versions of 'The Messiah' at several church organisations. In fact, he is in that wonderful position of being able to combine the best voices for any particular audience.

He was at one time a cinema projectionist, then he became manager of a record shop in Elland. Now he owns his own shop in that town and 'the music goes round and round' in his working life as well as his hobby.

HILDA M. GLEDHILL.

The following was voluntarily held over by me from the Record Research items which appeared in the October edition of Hillandale News.

PICTURE POSTCARDS

Many moons ago I had an enquiry from "goodness knows who" asking if I knew of a work called "the Postcard March", for someone connected with the Postcard collecting fraternity was anxious to receive some information about same. I could not help at the time but I have since come across the following in my researches so I hope the information will find its way to the right quarters.

Disque Zonophone Monarque-Z-80010, issued in France, July, 1909. "Carte Postale, mazurka" (Strobl). The reverse is "Gege d'Amour" (E. Marie). Both sides were performed by La Garde Republicaine Band of France.

The 7½" FONOTIPIAS

Two more discs have come to light as follows:-

9508 (Ammiraglio, marca. (Zanfi) 9510 (Il Foro, valzer. (Bartolini)
9509 (Croce Rosse, polka. (Corridori) 9511 (Mandolinomania, mazurka (Bartoli)

All four sides were recorded by the "Musica della Regina Marina Italiana" under their conductor, Maestro Cav. Seba Maticena.

Were there any further issues in this series?

RECORD COMPANIES' SIGNATURE TUNES

It appears to have been the practice of a number of recording companies, in the early days of the Talking Machine Industry, to commission minor musical works which included the name of the company in the title. How many there were of these I have no idea but I have come across the following examples which may be of some interest to members.

"International Zonophone Co. March" - Orquesta de Teatro San Martin, Buenos Aires. 10" Disco Zonophone X-1319.

"Alla Marcia 'A. I. C. C. '" -Municipal Band of Milan. 7" Disco Zonofono. 1420.
"A. I. C. C. " were the initials of the "Anglo-Italian Commerce Company" who were the Italian agents for the International Zonophone Company of New York and Berlin.

"Valse pour Zonophone" - Monsieur Jacquemot - Ocarina solo. 7" Disque Zonophone, No. 12000.

All three aforementioned records were issued prior to 1904.

"Odeon March" (D.R. Pryor) - Imperial Infantry Band. 10¾" Odeon Record. 66331, issued in November 1908.

"Climax March" played by the Columbia Orchestra on Climax Record No. 16, a record which must have been issued as early as 1902. It was later re-labelled as a Black and Silver Columbia disc, still with the number 16.

"Favorite Polka" - General-Field Marshal Prince Albert of Prussia's Regimental Band. (How is that for the longest artist's name?), on Favorite Record No. 1-12069e, issued in November, 1906.

On United States of America, Zonophone Records, circa 1901/2, we have the following two 9" diameter recordings:

No. 755. The Zonophone Waltz played by the Zonophone Orchestra.

No. 9784. The Zonophone March, also played by the Zonophone Orchestra.

FURTHER EARLY RECORDINGS OF NATIONAL ANTHEMS AND HYMNS

Royal Italian March - Banda Municipale di Milano. 7" Disco Zonofono 546.

Uruguayan National Hymn - Banda Municipale di Milano. 7" Disco Zonofono 561.

Inno Garibaldi - Banda Municipale di Milano. 7" Disco Zonofono 562.

Inno Mamali - Banda Municipale di Milano. 7" Disco Zonofono 568.

Inno Garibaldi - Coristi del Teatro alla Scala di Milano. Disco Zonofono 1441.

La Brabaconne - Melgaty, baritone. 7" Disque Zon-o-phone 1949.

ZONOPHONE RESEARCH

As members will observe, most of the above mentioned discs are Zonophone recordings and the information was close at hand owing to the current researches at present being undertaken by yours truly, as regards the history of the five companies involved in their manufacture and distribution, and by fellow member, Ernie Bayly, who is concentrating on the complete listing of, not only the records of the old independent International Zonophone Company, but also of the United States manufactured Zonophones (BEFORE they came under the control of the Victor Talking Machine Company) and the whole output of Zonophone Records of the Gramophone Company Ltd in respect of those discs issued in the British series of catalogue numbers.

I am kept "up-to-date" on the progress of this cataloguing and, as far as the Zono-phone Records of the old independent International Zonophone Company are concerned, the position at the moment is that out of the 6,500 numbers which encompassed both the 7" and 10" single sided records, we have over 4,500 listed, a total which, twelve months ago, we would have thought impossible to have amassed. This represents a total of just over 68% of what could be the greatest number of possible recordings numbered within the independent International Zonophone Company's cataloguing system.

But the percentage known of the entire catalogue may be higher than the 68% already achieved for we have blocks of numbers within the known range of numbers for which we have no disc information at all. This has given rise to the thought that perhaps these blocks of numbers were not used. On the other hand, we know that there was a special list of 200, or so, South American recordings, details from which would be most welcome if anyone knows of the existence of same. Additionally there were agencies in Egypt and Turkey, and we have no details of Arabic or Turkish records! There were also Greek and Finnish repertoire recordings about which, again, we have no knowledge and we also feel certain that, apart from the Russian vocals, (which are very few in numbers), there must have been a considerable repertoire of Russian popular songs and instrumental numbers. In the hope that a collector, somewhere in the world, can provide us with some information, I append herewith the following blocks of numbers which came within the range of numbers used by the International Zonophone Company for their Black and Gold labelled 7" and 10" diameter discs, but about which we remain ignorant in respect of the countries in which these numbers were used or what was on the recordings. Not knowing where these numbers were issued we cannot state what the label style would have been! Therefore, for the moment, we simply call them "Zon-o-phone Records".

7" discs: Nos. 126 to 353: Nos. 779 to 945: 10000 to 10054: 10101 to 10141:
Nos. 10171 to 10215: 10222 to 10519: 12398 to 12499: 12596 to 12621.

10" discs: Nos. X-75 to X-142: X-148 to X-161: X-164 to X-173: X-1000 to
X-1023: X-1031 to X-1067: X-1320 to X-1465: X-1467 to X-1493:
X-2239 to X-2252: X-2373 to X-2504.

I would ask that if any of the above numbers are known to have been used on

etched centre Zonophone Records in the United States of America to let either Ernie Bayly or myself know about such a thing, with details.

I must make it quite clear that we are not interested in Green & Gold labelled Zonophones, with reference to above, unless they happen to bear any of the numbers on the label or "in the wax", outside of the label area.

Of particular interest to me is the completion of the listing of the United Kingdom's section of the International Zonophone Company's catalogue. With that end in view, I herewith enumerate the known "Blank Entries" with regard to the British recorded Zon-o-phone Records.

7" diameter, Black Labelled Zon-o-phone Records, (later pressings MAY be green labelled):

Nos. 571, 572, 596, 599, 600, 605, 623, 624, 629, 637, 638, 1051, 1054 to 1059, 1061, 1085, 1086, 1093 to 1097, 1099, 1100, 1106, 1109, 1115, 1135, 12783, 12787 to 12789, 12792/3, 12805 to 12807, 12811/2, 12838, 12844, 12855 to 12858, 12864, 12869, 12877, 12888, 12902, 12913, 12916 to 12918, 12920 to 12922, 12926, 12928 to 12930, 12933/4, 12937/8.

10" diameter:

X-231, X-238/9, X-269, X-272, X-2310, X-2312, X-2314 to X-2316, X-2331/2, X-2335, X-2361, X-2363, X-2371.

There is a possibility that a number of any of the records with numbers mentioned may have been pressed with Light Blue & Gold labels, Dark Blue & Gold labels or Orange & Silver labels, but rarely so.

The Zonophone Catalogue of the old independent company will be a very interesting document, containing as it will, even at its present stage of completion, over 5,000 entries which will include hundreds of U. S. A. recordings known to have been offered for sale in Europe, the European recordings spanning a period of just over two years and the American recordings just over three years. Can you assist in making this a more complete catalogue than it already is? Later a complete "Blank Entries" list will be published for the "International" numbers and a separate list for the American numbers.

Please send all details to me: Frank Andrews, [REDACTED] London, N.W.10, England.

One last observation. Many of these first type of Zonophone records were retained in the catalogues of various countries by the Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd. and issued as Double-Sided records, sometimes coupled with G. & T. Ltd. own Zonophone recordings, but still retaining their catalogue numbers, so green labelled Zonophone Records of this type are worthy of a look!

CORRESPONDENCE

[REDACTED], Haywards Heath, Sussex.

Re. RECORD LABELS.

As I have only been seeing the Hill & Dale issues for the past three years I may have missed out on any previous attempts to produce a complete list of British Record labels. I have of course made a note of Frank's listings in connection with his slide lectures but there is still a whole lot missing.

I am also aware that John Freestone is contributing some material for the Hi-Fi News. I have overheard criticisms of this series by members. However I would welcome a more constructive approach in the form of a very simple listing,

possibly including dates, which one can carry around and use for checking for any possible new listing.

Junk shops and Jumble Sales do not offer very much nowadays and in a very few years we shall find nothing. There are also 'serious' collectors who have stacks of insignificant titles stashed away among which some obscure label could be found.

The qualification would of course be that the record was offered for sale to the public, not an advertising record. Consequently, Aerial, Curry's, etc. (sold in bicycle shops) would qualify.

This may be yet another burden for poor Frank but I think that it would be well worth doing.

Yours,
Roy A-----.

[REDACTED] Cockfosters, Herts.

Reading the report of the Annual General Meeting of 12 Oct 1974, Mr. Ernest Bayly stated, "He thought member, Mr. Goldsmith, was holding a gramophone belonging to the Society which an elderly lady had presented to us. What was going to happen to that?"

Many years ago Mr. Bayly asked me to look at a gramophone in this area. Only once have I been asked to do this.

It was owned by an old friend I had not seen for years. The machine turned out to be a rather dilapidated H.M.V. cabinet gramophone of the thirties, not worth storage space for the Society. I was given to two young members living, I believe, in the Ilford area.

Yours sincerely,
Alan Goldsmith.

[REDACTED] Bournemouth BH6 4JA.

Since my talk to the Society recently I have discovered a few details about Tom Wootwell.

Sincerely,
Ernie Bayly.

TOM WOOTWELL. Known as 'The Loose-Legged Comedian'.

He was born in 1865 at Highbury and at the age of 13 joined a troupe known as the American Eccentrics & Contortionists.

Jules Girard saw him and he became one of his well-known trio.

In 1882, aged 17, he was 'Friday' in 'Robinson Crusoe' since when he was in many pantomimes, some of which he produced himself.

His first appearance as a Music Hall artist as a comedian in his own right was at the Parthenon, Liverpool, under Oswald Stoll.

In 1897 he had a successful tour of Australia where a 6-month tour stretched to nine months.

[REDACTED] Hereford, HR2 0HL.

Thank you for the Hillandale News which I am always glad to receive and read.

May I draw your attention to "Brief Biographies", which are interesting in character but not always strictly accurate. For instance, in the October number

mention is made of Isobel Baillie and Roy Henderson having both been born in Scotland. Isobel Baillie and Roy Henderson owe their first steps to fame to Manchester and Nottingham respectively. Miss Baillie is an Hon. M.A. of Manchester University and is also a C.B.E. Mr. Henderson is a C.B.E. and was not a celebrated choral conductor, although a very capable one. He is, in fact, an internationally celebrated teacher of singing, after a brilliant career as a baritone singer. To the best of my knowledge and belief Agnes Nicholls (Lady Harty) was a student of the Royal College of Music and was, I also believe, a C.B.E., not an O.B.E. If I am wrong about the latter item I apologize to Gerry Annand, because I usually admire his brief biographies.

By the way, John Acton was for the greater part of his life a Manchester man and a magnificent teacher. The late Norman Allin and I were both at one time his pupils until I went to the R.C.M. It was a happy memory for me to see John Acton's name mentioned.

Yours sincerely,
George Baker.

[REDACTED], Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

I have read with extreme interest the article by Mr. Peter G. Adamson in the October Hillandale News, about Berliner matrix numbers.

May I please make a strong request of Mr. Adamson, through you, for a list of the complete embossed markings on the discs he mentions. This could be either for publication by you or a personal request for my own research. I have been assembling a file of Berliner, G & T, and early HMV Matrix numbers for some years. Mr. Adamson apparently has a small trove which would be a helpful addition to what I have. What I would like to know, in every case, is every letter, number or marking on his records, in correct order, together with the date which is often embossed in such discs, and the number of the published record, along with artist, medium, and title. It's a lot to ask, I know, but the raw data could be of incalculable value.

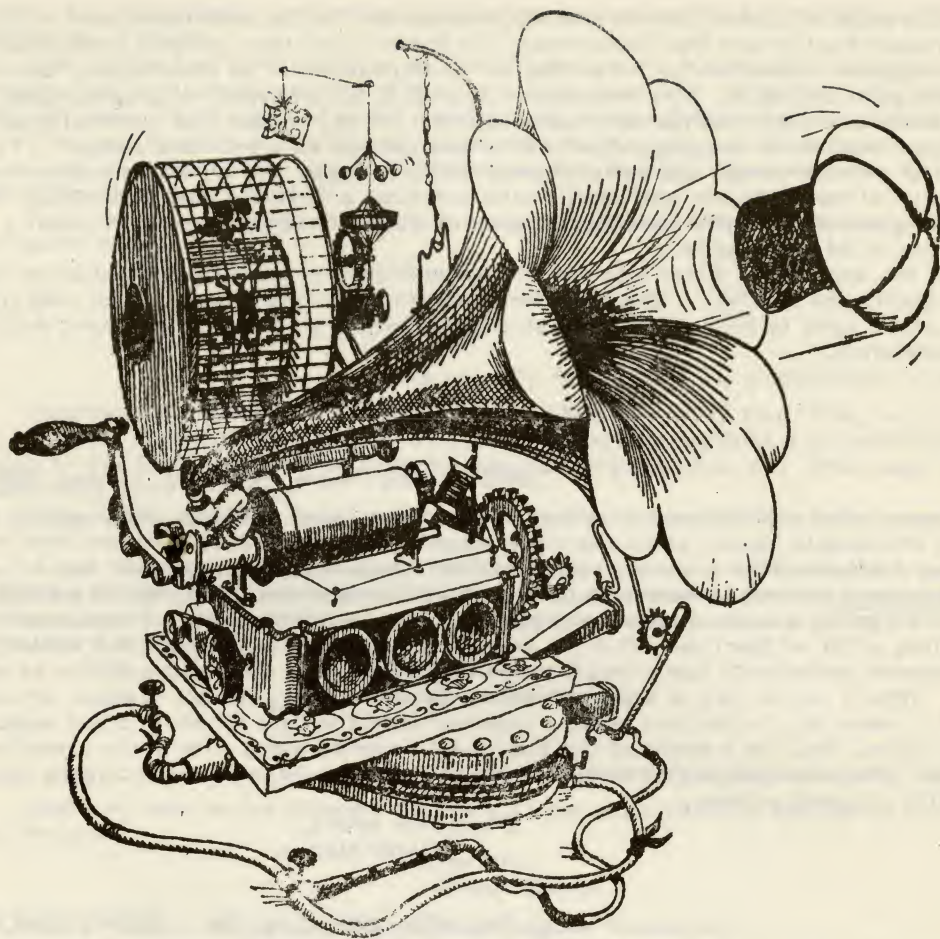
With all good wishes,

Sincerely yours,
Peter Morse.

[REDACTED] Daly City, Ca., 94017, U. S. A.

I noted the article, A Non-Standard Standard (Oct. 74), with great interest. The motor appears to be that of a Columbia coin machine. The case appears to be non-Edison also. One of the clues to this discontinuity of parts is the endgate. In the U.S. the straight endgate that clipped onto a raised stub on the right of the straightedge was changed when the "new style" case was introduced. With the "new case" came a downward curved endgate and the upright stub on the straightedge was eliminated. This "new case" non-standard Standard has butt joints on the case corners (as best I can make out from the photos) while all of the Standards from A to G had comb joints. The lid handle dates from an earlier version also. It has no grooves in its center and is the more 'fat' handle which went out with the square case. All of this leads me to conclude that the author's hypothesis of this being the work of a skilled craftsman is correct.

Such machines are occasionally found in the U.S. also. I once had an electrically driven Home that looked very authentic. The give-away was the 1925 patent date on the Edison Econowatt motor.



MONTHLY MEETING REPORTS OF THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH
SOCIETY DURING THE SEVENTH YEAR OF THE SOCIETY'S EXISTENCE,
MAY 1925 to APRIL 1926.

MAY 28th, 1925.

The Annual General Meeting was held on May 28th, Mr. Hillyer occupying the chair.

In the course of a few remarks Mr. Hillyer stated that the Society had reason to be satisfied with its financial position since, not only was there a cash balance in hand, but the library had been considerably improved.

He paid special tribute to the loyalty of the members and pointed out that, whereas the membership of the gramophone societies was a constantly changing one, the City of London Phonograph Society could boast of the same old faces, year in and year out.

As the phonograph meetings had been proved to be more popular than the radio nights the Committee decided that, in future, most of the meetings should be devoted to the Phonograph.

He (Mr. Hillyer) thought that the time had come for a change of Officers as neither he nor Mr. Crawley could spare the time to do justice to the growing needs of the Society. It was decided to elect Mr. Norton as Chairman and Mr. Wilkins as Secretary for the next year.

A hearty vote of thanks was passed for Messrs. Crawley and Hillyer for their past services, for let it be remembered, it is largely due to their enthusiastic efforts that this Society has been so successful.

We are particularly fortunate in obtaining Mr. Wilkins for our Secretary, as Mr. Wilkins has given up both the gramophone and the wireless in order to devote his time to the Phonograph.

A special vote of thanks was accorded to Mrs. Crawley who has resigned her post as Assistant Librarian.

Mr. Hillyer added that a few of the old Officers were willing to stand again including Mr. Miles as Librarian and Mr. Felix Sykes, the Recording Secretary. He thought it advisable to re-elect the latter gentleman as it might be difficult to get rid of him!

The Society has decided to hold meetings in July and August.

After the interval a number of Amberols were played on a Fireside Phonograph, kindly lent by Mr. Burnell.

Lovers of Oratorio should possess the two records from "Messiah" made by Reed Miller (2498 & 9), "Comfort ye my People" and "Every Valley".

The extraordinary fidelity of Edison recording was well demonstrated in a record entitled "Old-Time Street Fair" (1999) and the selection is above the average of its type.

"Fra poco a mi ricovero" from "Lucia" is one of the best Italian records.

An interesting violin record from the Royal Purple list, played by Kathleen Parlow, received favourable comment.

The next meeting will be held on June 25th at 6-30 p.m.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

JUNE 1925.

Our June meeting was devoted to a demonstration of Blue Amberols given by Mr. Ross, whilst Mr. Maskill provided the horn and reproducer. The Phonograph was in very good form and the programme provided by Mr. Ross was an interesting one and consisted principally of records that are unknown to the majority of members.

Amongst the records played may be mentioned, "Fairy Tales Overture" - Edison Concert Band; "Menuet" (Porpora, Kreisler) - violin solo (4816); "Rigoletto" - "Cortigiani" - by the late Mario Laurenti (29035); and two records, just issued, entitled "Marche Militaire" (Schubert) (4990) and "In a Monastery Garden" (4985).

The members were very impressed with a "brass" record made by Frederic Martin entitled "The Armourer's Song" from "Robin Hood" (2583) and a flute solo "Victoria Regina" (2699) won well merited applause on account of its true tonal quality.

The "Record of the Evening" was "Weber's Last Thought" (2506) (QUESTION: Should this have been "Weber's Last Waltz"? - I ask as I am not familiar with Edison recorded cylinders! - F. Andrews); a remarkable cornet solo by Gustav F. Heim.

The Committee has decided to arrange a definite programme for the winter months and we hope to secure the services of a well-known lecturer.

In future, we shall hold our meetings on every third Wednesday in the month. At our August meeting we shall hold a Dutch Auction.

The Secretary of the City of London Phonograph Society regrets that he could not notify some of the members of the Society as to the change of meeting night, viz., "Third Wednesday every month".

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

JULY 1925.

At the commencement of our July meeting, a letter, which had been received from Mr. Watts of the London & Provincial Phonograph Company, was read out by our Secretary. In this letter, Mr. Watts signified his intention to help the City of London Society in every way possible.

This announcement received general satisfaction from the members present who passed a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Watts.

Afterwards our Secretary informed the meeting that a provisional programme had been arranged for the coming winter, the said programme to include a lecture, a competition evening and a dance.

An interesting selection of records followed including a number of titles not hitherto heard at our meetings.

"Gypsy John" (1649); "Cavatina" from "Faust" (28195) by Paul Althouse; (21895) "Mattinata" by Charles Hackett; "Happy Days" - Elizabeth Spencer (1779); and the Quartette from "Rigoletto" (1528) were all well received but the audience considered "Punchinello" by Edmund A. John to be quite the finest record of the evening.

Next month we are to hold a Dutch Auction of records and accessories and Mr. Hillyer has kindly consented to act as Auctioneer. Any member who has records, etc., to dispose of should bring them along on Wednesday, August 19th.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

AUGUST 1925.

The August meeting took the form of a Dutch Auction of Blue Amberols and accessories, conducted by Mr. Hillyer (or Hillier?). Mr. Hillier proved himself to be not only an able Auctioneer but, at the same time, earned the reputation of being a first rate entertainer and the audience was kept in roars of laughter by his sheer spontaneous wit.

Upwards of 100 records were sold and good prices were obtained for the early recordings.

Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 16th.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

SEPTEMBER 1925.

Our September meeting took the form of an enjoyable programme of records provided by Mr. Hillyer. The standard set was a high one, so space will not permit us to mention more than a portion of the titles played.

Our Secretary provided us with typed programmes.

The concert opened with a splendid record by the American Symphony Orchestra entitled "Hermit Bell Overture", and this was followed by "My Song shall always be of Thy Mercy" (Hymn of Praise), a duet which has, unfortunately, been withdrawn from the list (1579).

Anna Case was heard next in an English version of "Caro Nome" - "Rigoletto"

(28190); whilst a record of Tosti's "Venetian Song" (1640) demonstrated the remarkable naturalness of Edison cylinder recording.

Mr. Hillyer then played two operatic excerpts made by Margarita Sylva, "Balletta" from "Pagliacci" and "Voi lo sapete" from its 'companion opera', "Cavalleria Rusticana".

"Villanelle" (2015), by Mary Kaiser, is a record that possesses considerable tone-colour and is superior to a needle-disc record of the same title rendered by Selma Kurz. "Calm as the Night" (2062), a beautiful duet by Elizabeth Spencer and James F. Harrison, brought the proceedings to a close.

During the evening our Chairman, Mr. Norton, read out to the members a letter which the Recording Secretary intended to send to the Edison Company. The members were unanimous in agreeing that the letter should be despatched to "Thomas A. Edison, Ltd.", forthwith, as a protest in the name of the Society against the new Amberol duplicated recordings.

In the interval, Mr. Hillyer demonstrated 2 minute celluloid records made over 20 years ago. One was a quartette, made by the Liverpool "Indestructible Company", whilst the other cylinder was an "Edison Bell" record sung by Alma Jones entitled "The Miller's Daughter". This contralto record, like others made by the same singer, possesses considerable merit when reproduced under modern conditions.

Next month we are to have a "Competition Night" - two instrumental and two vocal. Mr. Wilkins has offered to give four Amberols as prizes. The meeting will be held on October 21st.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

OCTOBER 1925.

Our October meeting took the form of a Competition Evening, each competitor contributing two cylinders. The following were the records played:-

"Raymond Ov." - Edison Concert Band (1919); "Baby's Eyes" - John Young (22544); "Souvenir" - mandoline solo (2010); "Muleteer of Malaga" - Tom Kiniburgh (23018); "Dreams of the Prisoner" (2460); "The Kerry Dance" - Elizabeth Spencer (2146); "La Paloma" - Edison Concert Band (1509); Prologue from "Pagliacci" - Giovanni Baratto - Italian list; "Dolores, waltz" - Mexican Inst. Trio (22107); "Addio del passato", "La Traviata" - Adeline Agostinelli (22159); "Scene de Ballet" - Reed Band (2421); "Le Cor" - Paul Payan (27041); "Un Peu d'Amour" - Moss-Squire Celeste Orch. (23221); Mad Scene from "Lucia" - Selma Kurz (28162); "Predilecta Vabs" - Mexican (22027); "Obstination" - Paul Dufault (27145); "Girl in a Taxi, waltz" - German list - Johann Strauss Concert Band; "Vissi d'Arte", "Tosca" - Adeline Agostinelli (28137); "Solveig's Song" - Maria Tiffany (29060); "Rondo" - cello solos by Paulo Gruppe, (28173); "Gipsy John" - Wiederhold; "Simplicius Waltz" - Vecsy's Orchestra (28170).

Mr. Marshall won the first prize of four records for "Dreams of the Prisoner" and "Obstination" - French tenor, while the consolation prizes were awarded to Messrs. Andrews, Hillyer and Stephens.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

NOVEMBER 1925.

The members of the City of London Phonograph Society assembled together on November 18th to hear a programme of Blue "A"s prepared by our Secretary, Mr. Wilkins.

Amongst the records played were:- (27056) "Marche aux Flambeaux" No. 3 - La Garde Republicaine; (28139) "Ave Maria" - "Otello" - G. Maria Farnetti;

(23293) "The Garden of Your Heart" - Hughes Macklin; (1650) "Menuett and Gavotte" - Tollefsen Trio; (2004) "The Crucifix" - Reed Miller, Frank Croxton; "Solenne in quest'ora" - "La Forza del Destino" - Daddi/Reschiglian; and (2100) "Selection from Rigoletto" - Edison Concert Band.

Two organ records were played during the evening, "Marche aux Flambeaux" by A. W. Ketelbey, a Columbia Indestructible, and "A Waltz in the Moonlight and You", by Frederick Kersley, (Amberol 5030). Both these records leave much to be desired from the point of view of faithful organ recording, although the Edison record is quite wonderful in tone.

"Deep Down in My Heart" (1727), a bass solo by Joseph Parsons, like many other Amberol records, demonstrates the fact that, as far as the Phonograph is concerned, the problem of reproducing the sibilants had been solved over twelve years ago.

Our January meeting will take the form of a New Year's Dance.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

DECEMBER 1925.

The programme of Blue Amberol records for our December meeting was left in the hands of Mr. Norton, our Chairman, who provided us with an excellent "all-round" concert.

Mr. Wilkins distributed typed programmes amongst the audience which was much appreciated. The items played included the following:-

(2158) "Softly Awakes my Heart" - Samson and Delilah - Mary Garden;
(4782) Mazurka in A minor, op. 67, No. 4 and Mazurka in F sharp minor, op. 6, No. 1 (Chopin) played by Walter Chapman; (22461) "Vesti la giubba" - Pagliacci by E. Bettain; (1775) "The Dream Melody" - Victor Herbert's Orchestra; (27095) Bach's "Priore" by Paul Payan; and (4485) "Vienna Bon-Bons, waltz" (Strauss).

Scharwenka's "Polish Dance" (23162) is an admirable band version - in fact it gains considerably by its orchestral treatment, being more interesting than in the piano form - even when played by the composer himself!

Mr. Clarke's new monthly "The Phonograph" has met with considerable success. All the copies of No. 1 were sold out within a few days of publication and there are only a few more copies left of No. 2.

Will readers please note that the Editor's new and permanent address is 5a Tynemouth Road, Tottenham, N.15, and all subscriptions should be sent direct to Mr. R.H. Clarke.

The Whist Drive and Dance has been postponed until February. A small charge of one shilling, to assist funds of this Society, will be made for this night only.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

JANUARY 1926.

Mr. Marshall was responsible for the demonstration of Blue Amberols at our January meeting. Mr. Marshall brought along his wooden horn and tension reproducer fitted with a copper diaphragm. The membership was not a little surprised at the volume of sound reproduced by this combination.

Amongst the records played during the first half of the programme may be mentioned the following:- "Domini Novi" - Ov. (Auber) - Garde Republicaine; (2411) Patrol Comique; (1775) "Dream Melody" - Victor Herbert's Orchestra; (28106) Gounod's "Ave Maria" - Marie Rappold/Albert Spalding; (23391) "Your Dear Brown Eyes" - Hughes Macklin; (2184) "Rudolph's narrative from "La

Boheme" - Charles W. Harrison; (2451) Navajo Indian Songs - Geoffrey O'Hara; (2264) "Love's Old Sweet Song" - Elizabeth Spencer/Irving Gillette.

After the interval a number of dance records were reproduced including "Officer of the Day, & Hurricane", 2 step (1895), a record which deserves special mention.

Next month we are to have a Whist Drive and there will be a nominal charge of one shilling to assist the funds of the Society.

Our Secretary, Mr. J. Wilkins, 14, Burns Road, Battersea, S.W., is always pleased to hear from potential new members and, furthermore, he is open to demonstrate the Amberola phonograph, by appointment, to anyone who is unacquainted with its merits.

Our Society has now been in existence for nearly seven years and every cylinder enthusiast in the London district should become a member.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

FEBRUARY 1926.

"THE WHIST DRIVE" not reported! (Frank Andrews).

MARCH 1926.

This Society held a most successful dance on St. Patrick's Night and Mr. Marshall brought along his Home Phonograph to provide the music for the occasion. Mr. Marshall again used his tension reproducer to which he had fitted a copper diaphragm, and the volume of sound produced was very considerable. The dances were interspersed with the following items from the Blue Amberol list:-

1509 - "La Paloma" & "Mattinata" - Charles Hackett; 23338 - "The Admiral's Broom" - Peter Dawson; 23293 - "The Garden of Your Heart" - Hughes Macklin; 2184 - "Your Tiny Hand is Frozen" from "La Boheme" - Chas. W. Harrison; 1935 - "Sleepy Chile" - Elsie Baker; 1736 - "My Little Persian Song" - Chas. W. Harrison; "Tis Not True" - R. Festyn Davies; 2171 - "Dance of the Hours" - "La Gioconda" (Ponchielli) - ?.

Copies of No. 5 of Mr. Clarke's paper "The Phonogram" were on sale at the dance.

The arrangements for the evening were left in the hands of Mr. Wilkins.

Our next meeting will be held on April 21st.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

APRIL 1926.

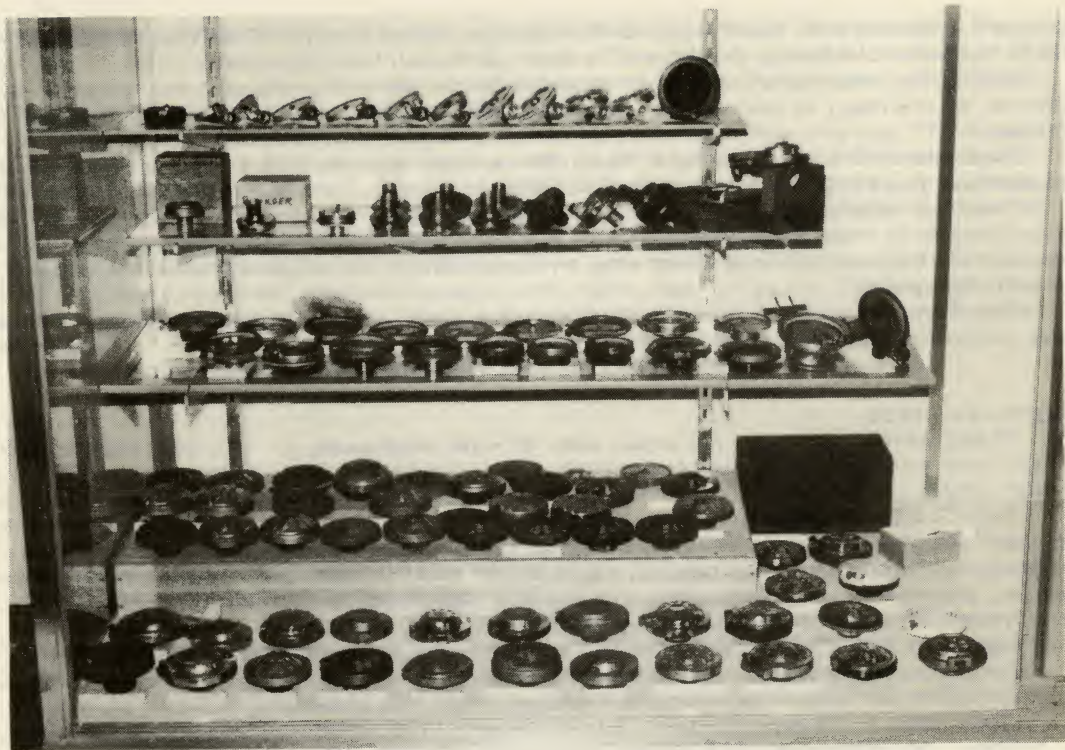
Our Secretary, Mr. J.T. Wilkins, provided the Blue Amberol records for our April meeting. The programme was of an attractive character but the following records made an especial appeal to the audience:-

2259 - "Coquetterie-Caprice Brilliant" - Reed Band; 1650 - "Menuett & Gavotte" - Tollefsen Trio; 28189 - "Volksliedchen and Bohemian Dances" - Hoffmann Quartette; 2100 - "Selection from Rigoletto" - Edison Concert Band; 23168 - "A Broken Heart" - String Quartette; 23159 - "Roses" - Hardy Williamson; 28154 - "Tannhauser" - "O Kehr Zuruck" - F. Egenieff, and 28149 - "Voci di Primavera, waltz" - Melitta Heim.

The Society has to acknowledge, with thanks, the gift of six Blue Amberol records presented to our Library by Mr. Marshall.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

Researched by Frank Andrews, 27-10-1974.



Collection of Reproducers by Toru Funahashi, Osaka

Extract from The Talking Machine News and Cinematograph Chronicle, June, 1904.

PHONO, GRAMO AND GRAPHO Some Distinctions and Differences.

Much of the confusion as to the various types of talking machines arises from the lack of a generic term by which to designate them as a class. In the case of pianos there is no difficulty. The different makes are usually known by the names of their manufacturers. But this is not wholly true of talking machines. The name phonograph cannot be accepted as covering all instruments that reproduce sound, for reasons which I shall point out. It has been stated that the United States Patent Office describes all talking machines as graphophones. Gramophone is distinctly a specific term, applying to a particular machine.

A brief review of the history of the invention will help us to understand matters. In 1878 Mr. Edison patented his invention of a talking machine. It was called phonograph; from the two Greek words, phonos, sound, and grapho, to write. The plan he employed in this invention for making records was by indenting a metallic foil.

The term indenting as used by Mr. Edison throughout his specifications, clearly implies the action of embossing or shaping the material without the removal of any part of it. This method of forming records of sound vibrations proved defective, and the prospect of obtaining anything but a rough approximation to a true record by means of it, became apparent to Mr. Edison himself. He is reported to have said: "I myself doubted whether I should ever see a perfect phonograph ready to record any kind of ordinary speech, and to give it out again intelligibly. So I dropped the phonograph and went to work upon the electric light."

For about ten years the matter lay dormant so far as the everyday world was concerned. But during all that time a group of scientific men were at work in a laboratory in Washington, digging deep into the mysteries of the problem and persevering in their task until success rewarded their efforts. These were Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone, his brother, Chichester Bell, and Professor Chas. Sumner Tainter. They finally perfected a machine that was a practical success, one that would record ordinary speech or other sounds and reproduce them with fidelity to the original. To it they gave the name graphophone. The main feature of the so-called improved phonograph was the making of records of sound by cutting or engraving in wax. This method, because the material is removed in the form of a shaving, is free from the defects of the indenting process, and greatly superior records were the result.

The phonograph, then, was first of all a machine which made its records by indenting on metal foil. The graphophone engraved them in wax. But the owners of the phonograph patents made an arrangement with the owners of the graphophone patents to entitle them to the benefit of the new invention. From that moment their machine ceased to be a phonograph, as that term was then understood, and became a graphophone. The manufacturers, however, continued to call their instrument a phonograph, and as both the phonograph and the graphophone became better known, the original significance of the name phonograph was gradually lost and it began to be used by many persons as a generic term to designate all talking machines.

Somewhat later another reproducing instrument was patented called the Berliner gramophone. Berliner was the name of its inventor and the word gramophone was made up of the Greek, gramma, written, and phonos, sound. This was a disc machine and the records were made by an etching process. The name gramophone has stuck to disc talking machines ever since, even though they now differ in principle from the original Berliner machine.

Thus we have three kinds of talking machines, each called by a distinctive name. It is not surprising, then, that there should be confusion in the correct use of these terms, particularly as one of them, phonograph, has changed its significance (or at least has added another meaning to its definition), whilst the graphophone is now made in the disc variety, a type of machine to which we have heretofore been accustomed to refer to specifically as the gramophone.

In essentials, all three machines are alike. In non-essentials there are many differences. The vital features of all talking machines are (1) the method of making the record, (2) the method of reproducing the record. Every talking machine the world over marketed to-day employs the engraving process for making its master records. Every talking machine, call it phonograph, graphophone, gramophone, zonophone, microphone, polyphone, lyraphone, echophone, or what you will, reproduces sound by means of a stylus, ball, or point tracking in the groove cut in the master by the recording implement, accurately following all the inequalities in these grooves, and thereby transmitting to the diaphragm practically the same vibrations which agitated it when the record was made, so that it gives out a replica of the original sound.

The fact that the phonograph has an end gate and the gramophone has not, has no bearing on the principles of the two machines. That the phonograph uses cylinder records and the gramophone flat ones, is no proof that in essentials the two machines are different. One engine governor may have a worm gear and five balls, and another may have but two and operate from a gear and pinion, but though they differ in details, there is absolutely no difference in principle between them. And so it is with talking machines. They all accomplish the same result by means of certain principles common to all of them, even though the method of applying the principles differ in details.

R. L. SAUBER, June, 1904.

FAMOUS STARS WHO CANNOT MAKE RECORDS

from Frank Andrews.

Men in charge of the record-making departments of the big talking-machine companies could, if they would, tell most interesting stories of the attempts of comic and opera and dramatic singing stars to sing into the phonograph, and whose efforts have resulted in failure, says an American exchange. Two of the best known drawing attractions of the U. S., Irish drama stars, whose managers bill them as "sweet singers", have tried to have records made of their voices, and have failed. Another star who is said to be unable to make a satisfactory record is Lillian Russell, the most photographed woman in the world, and she failed as dismally, according to rumour, as she did in her plunge into legitimate comedy after a life spent on the comic opera stage. Then there was Delia Fox. When an attempt was made to have her sing her "babbling brook" song from "Wang" into a machine she failed dismally, and a substitute, who was experienced in phonograph singing, made the record. The phonograph companies are honest with the public, however, and no deception is made to palm this record off as one of Miss Fox's. The reason so few comic opera stars, men or women, can make a satisfactory record is because they do not know how to sing correctly. It takes more than a natural voice to get the best results. One must have thorough training in the art of singing. For this reason, the singers in grand opera, trained from their teens to handle the voice properly and to breathe in the correct way, have no difficulty at all in making the records. One of the singers employed by the talking-machine companies, and a particular adept at this work, "Billy" Murray, is said to be unable to sing in a theatre one-half as effectively as for the phonograph. Thus some men who are good phonograph singers are not good stage singers, and vice versa.

LAUGHING FOR A LIVING The Jolly John Nash of the States

from Frank Andrews

One of the most unique characters in the talking machine world, says the "Music Trades" (New York) is George Johnson, who is now working for all the companies, doing "laughing songs". Johnson is said to be the most infectious laughter in the country. He is described by the talking machine men as the original "haw-haw" man, and practically every laughing song heard on the phonograph is sung by him. He even figures in some songs, which have only a few bars of laughing chorus

on a laughing line. Johnson is a negro who has been making a living by his exuberance for years. In the old days, it is said, he once sang the same song fifty-six times in one day, and his laugh had as much merriment in it at the conclusion as when he started.

A talking machine man tells of Johnson that he was in a Western city one day in a gallery at the theatre. A black comedian came out and did a laughing song. Johnson snorted after the first chorus. He moved about restlessly and at the end of the second verse shouted a protest.

"You ain't singing dat song right," he cried.

"What's the reason I ain't?" declared the singer from the stage angrily.

"Praps you can sing it better."

"I sure can," declared Johnson.

"Well, come down then and try it."

Johnson left the gallery, slipped into the stage entrance and took up the dare. He scored his usual success.

HILL AND DALE RECORDING.
(To the Editor of The Gramophone).

Dear Sir,

I have no doubt that many overseas readers of THE GRAMOPHONE will be interested in having fuller details of the new hill-and-dale system of recording now being developed in the United States than have so far been given. This method is said to bring revolutionary improvements, and many observers hope that it will rejuvenate the now moribund American record industry.

Deems Taylor, writing recently of the experiments being made with the vertical cut method by the Bell Telephone engineers, said, "What the Bell engineers under Halsey A. Frederick have done is, first of all, to revolutionise the method and the materials of recording. Instead of electroplating their master record, they deposit the metal upon it in the form of vapour so that its fineness is not that of grains but of molecules. Hence, fewer and smaller bumps in the sound track... which is vertically cut. Consequently, the needle, instead of continually hitting the sides as well as the bottom of the track, slides along the bottom, with very little friction against the sides.

"The disc itself is made of a new translucent material that is whitish-yellow in colour, as flexible as celluloid, and presents a surface that, even in the sound track, is as smooth as polished plate-glass. The needle is a diamond... and is practically indestructible. It is so balanced that it rests upon the disc with a pressure equal to only two tons per square inch. If this weight seems alarming, be assured by remembering that the average steel needle exerts a pressure of 15 tons per square inch upon the disc. The result of these developments is a disc that comes much nearer being absolutely scratchless than anything heretofore thought possible.

"At the demonstration I heard, the reproducing apparatus consisted of a bank of eight large speakers for transmitting the lower sound frequencies and four very small speakers to handle the higher ones (the overtones). Incidentally, the power employed was fifteen times that used in the average picture house... The demonstration started at a frequency-limit of 3,500 and then moved up.

"One's first impression was that of an average sound-picture, except that the scratch was reduced to a faint tapping sound. Then as the illuminated sign read '5,000', '7,500', '9,000', one began to realize how ludicrously imperfect our sound-recording has been. The mud began to sift out of the sound - no longer did one have

the impression that the speakers were standing behind heavy curtains, the 'S' sounds, which are the bugbear of all sound engineers, became sharp and clear, with no suggestion of lisp, the final consonants emerged clean-cut and unblurred, the vowels took on their full value."

A later article published in the New York Times mentions that the Bell system will record frequencies up to 10,000 cycles and asserts that it will exclude extraneous sounds, either in the form of surface noise or of distortion. "A wider range of volume and much longer playing time have also been gained. Twelve-inch records will play from 15 to 20 minutes on one side."

Quoting further from the Times article: "Careful measurements of the lateral method of cutting, it was said, showed that a certain amount of distortion was due to the cutting method itself, which permits the needle to skid from side to side.... In the new (hill-and-dale) method, although the actual pressure on the disc is small, it is sufficient - in conjunction with a light spring by which the needle is fastened to the reproducing head - to force the stylus to follow the exact undulations at all times. There is no skipping, and thus the distorting frequencies that occur with side-cut records are absent."

"Records are made, by a hot pressing process, of a very smooth and practically unbreakable material. The reproducing stylus is not a replaceable steel needle but a permanent jewel point. Because of the light pressure of the reproducing stylus, records will last for several thousand playings without deterioration. One of the outstanding achievements is a much greater naturalness in the reproduced speech or music."

One point that does not yet appear to have been made clear is whether the Victor Company, which has for so many years controlled the recording activities of Stokowski and the Philadelphia Symphony and who have been energetically recording for the new system, or whether some new company will take over the sales rights of the Bell records and attempt to make headway against the American public's present intense indifference to the gramophone and all its potentialities.

It is notable, however, that this "new" method is, in its essentials, a harking back to Thomas Edison's way of making disc records: recording by the hill-and-dale method, using a diamond point and having a "floating" action of the stylus so that there is no wear on the record. The chief difference seems to be that the new records are "translucent" but unbreakable, while Edison secured permanence by making his records about three times as thick as ordinary discs. Many of us have all along contended that Edison records, within sharply defined limits of range and volume, were by far the best ever made by anybody, and the seeming supremacy of what we regarded as the inferior lateral system has galled us within recent years. Now we begin to feel that daylight is ahead and have all the delectable sensations of those fortunate ones who have cast their bread upon the waters and seen it return after many days.

Yours faithfully,

"EDISONIAN".

U. S. A.

(With acknowledgement to "The Gramophone", July, 1932).



Needle Box Collection of Toru Funahashi, Osaka